

EASTER Season Devotional Journey

.....A journey to seek deeper understanding of a resurrected life



Justice is often brought up by passionate teachers, pastors, and leaders inviting us into new action, but what about the actions you and I take every day? Biblical justice isn't an action once a year; it's about infusing what we already do with Kingdom values; it's a lifestyle. This sermon series is designed to help us live justly in six key areas of life: advocacy, prayer, consumption, generosity, relationships and creation care. Join us to seek justice that permeates our everyday life choices - pushing us not just to seek justice but to live justly.

Worship & Prayer Room

*Let us journey together to seek
God's presence*

2nd Tuesday | MONTHLY
SOC Main Hall

Free to come between 7-9pm

Next Session | 11 JUNE 2019

Personal Devotional Journey

In your own quiet room

This devotional journal takes you on a journey through worship & prayer where you can come into God's presence; build a relationship with Jesus; and be ministered in the Holy Spirit.....

As You Begin.....

What does worship mean to me? Is my worship God centred and pleasing to Him? Have I personally encountered with God during worship? Does God really listen and answer my prayers?

As we considered these questions, let us consider what Jesus said in Luke 10...‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind.’

In fact He is calling us to: ‘COME, worship me with your whole life, and you will experience transformation in your soul, your heart, your mind and your strength....’

This is Whole Life Worship....

We encounter with God in the journey of our life. Whether we gather in our church, in our home or work place, in our small groups, or in our personal quiet time, we seek the presence of our Father God, we build a relationship with Jesus and ready to be ministered by the Holy Spirit. In fact each of our ‘Daily Walk’ with God forms the basis in shaping our corporate worship culture.

Hence the church would like to invite you to walk this worship & prayer journey together. This devotional journal takes you on a path which helps you focus on God. Feel free to use this in your personal quiet time, or you can come along to the ‘Corporate Worship Space’, which takes place in SOC on 2nd Tuesday every month , and journey with other brothers & sisters in our church.

The Corporate Worship Spaces are not events to attend - hence feel free to come and leave anytime between the set time. When you come inside you are free to pray, meditate, reflect at your own pace, share your thoughts with others, and minister to each other with prayers.

The only agenda is to encounter with God.....

Journey Guide

When we spend time with God alone in worship and prayer, He welcomes us into a personal friendship that grows deeper over time. In this friendship we not only sense His presence and speak to Him as we journey through our daily lives, but also learn to hear His voice.

Therefore seek His presence in your life every day. If your walk with Him is close, expect Him to draw you closer. Our God is always ready to meet us where we are and bring us further with Him. You will experience life in all of its fullness.

The following is a simple guide in your journey to explore and experience our God in the different spaces of our whole being – your SOUL, your HEART, your MIND, your STRENGTH

**WORSHIP –
engage in God’s
presence**

**REFLECT –
engage with His Word**

**PRAYER -
engage in
conversation with
God**

Try this journal format
to record your journey

Posture of your soul

surrender your everything
come into His
presence to adore & praise Him
wait - listen - meditate

Status of your heart

open your heart
allow Him to search inside out
confess - forgive - heal

Thinking in your mind

consider your life situations at present
hold tight to His words & truth
read - reflect - ask

Strength to serve

commit your life to serve Him
move with the Holy Spirit
response - minister - supplicate

**Justice and
Advocacy:
Using Your
Voice to
Campaign for
Justice**

Week 5

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice you have chosen the side of the oppressor.” - Desmond Tutu

“It is impossible to ignore the political implications of biblical justice.” - Joel Edwards

Week 5 | Sun.19 May – Sat. 25 May
Scripture Reading: I Esther 3:1-11, 4:13-14, 8:3-8

Esther 3:1-11

1 After these events, King Xerxes honoured Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, elevating him and giving him a seat of honour higher than that of all the other nobles.

2 All the royal officials at the king's gate knelt down and paid honour to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honour.

3 Then the royal officials at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?"

4 Day after day they spoke to him but he refused to comply. Therefore they told Haman about it to see whether Mordecai's behaviour would be tolerated, for he had told them he was a Jew.

5 When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honour, he was enraged.

6 Yet having learned who Mordecai's people were, he scorned the idea of killing only Mordecai. Instead Haman looked for a way to destroy all Mordecai's people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes.

7 In the twelfth year of King Xerxes, in the first month, the month of Nisan, the pur (that is, the lot) was cast in the presence of Haman to select a day and month. And the lot fell on the twelfth month, the month of Adar.

8 Then Haman said to King Xerxes, "There is a certain people dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom who keep themselves separate. Their customs are different from those of all other people, and they do not obey the king's laws; it is not in the king's best interest to tolerate them.

9 If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued to destroy them, and I will give ten thousand talents of silver to the king's administrators for the royal treasury."

10 So the king took his signet ring from his finger and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.

11 "Keep the money," the king said to Haman, "and do with the people as you please."

Esther 3:1-11

13 "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape.

14 For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"

Esther 8:3-8

3 Esther again pleaded with the king, falling at his feet and weeping. She begged him to put an end to the evil plan of Haman the Agagite, which he had devised against the Jews.

4 Then the king extended the gold scepter to Esther and she arose and stood before him.

5 "If it pleases the king," she said, "and if he regards me with favour and thinks it the right thing to do, and if he is pleased with me, let an order be written overruling the dispatches that Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, devised and wrote to destroy the Jews in all the king's provinces.

6 For how can I bear to see disaster fall on my people? How can I bear to see the destruction of my family?"

7 King Xerxes replied to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, "Because Haman attacked the Jews, I have given his estate to Esther, and they have impaled him on the pole he set up.

8 Now write another decree in the king's name in behalf of the Jews as seems best to you, and seal it with the king's signet ring - for no document written in the king's name and sealed with his ring can be revoked."

Reflections

1. Why is Esther hesitant to speak to the king at first?
2. What is the value of Mordecai influencing Esther to advocate for her people, and what are the implications for our understanding of political advocacy today?
3. Both Esther's advocacy, and the Jubilee 2000 movement, were inspired by the call of those in oppression for advocacy to challenge injustice. Can you think of examples of this in modern advocacy movements?
4. What are the risks if those who are experiencing injustice have no voice in our advocacy?
5. What is God saying to you, and what are you going to do about it?

Prayer

Lord, give me courage to take risks the way Esther did, and to challenge injustice. Even if it is at great cost to me. Help me to steward my voice and advocate for justice with my elected officials. Be with our government and leaders who make major decisions that impact people all over the world. Give them wisdom, tenderness, and sensitivity to the cries of those living in poverty.

**Justice and
Consumption:
Possessions
Are Not Power**

Week 6

“The witness to simplicity is profoundly rooted in the biblical tradition, and most perfectly exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ.”- Richard J. Foster

“When we recognize that the people who make our stuff have hopes, dreams, and personalities, we can’t help but care about whether their job pays them a living wage and allows them to reach those dreams.”- Kelsey Timmerman

Week 6 | Sun.26 May – Sat. 1 June
Scripture Reading : Jeremiah 22:13-17

13 “Woe to him who builds his palace by unrighteousness, his upper rooms by injustice, making his own people work for nothing, not paying them for their labour.

14 He says, ‘I will build myself a great palace with spacious upper rooms. ’So he makes large windows in it, panels it with cedar and decorates it in red.

15 Does it make you a king to have more and more cedar? Did not your father have food and drink? He did what was right and just, so all went well with him.

16 He defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me? ”declares the Lord.

17 “But your eyes and your heart are set only on dishonest gain, on shedding innocent blood and on oppression and extortion.”

Reflections

- 1. What specific acts or situations of injustice are found in this passage?**
- 2. Contrast the two kinds mentioned in the Jeremiah passage. What was the problem with the son's wealth?**
- 3. Do you know who/what sustains your lifestyle? Share with the group about one way you try to seek justice with your consumption.**
- 4. What is God saying to you, and what are you going to do about it?**

Prayer

Lord, forgive me for the times I consume goods selfishly or unwisely, without regard for my impact on others. Help me to be aware of how I consume on a daily basis and how I can promote the flourishing of others through my choices. Help me to live justly in the area of consumption. Not as a Pharisee seeking to keep the "justice" laws, but rather as an act of worship towards you.

**Justice and
Generosity:
Justice Will
Cost You
Something**

Week 7

“If our giving does not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say it is too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot because our commitment to giving excludes them.”-

C.S. Lewis

“It’s not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.”- Mother Teresa

Week 7 | Sun. 2June – Sat. 8 June
Scripture Reading : Isaiah 58:4-10

4 Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.

5 Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes ?Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?

6 Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?

7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk,

10 and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

Reflections

- 1. It is clear in Isaiah 58 that God wants us to “spend” ourselves; this means giving of ourselves. How do you define giving sacrificially?**
- 2. What does the passage describe as the benefits of living generously?**
- 3. Fasting is often considered a form of worship that shows great devotion. What does Isaiah 58 teach us about acts of justice as worship?**
- 4. What is God saying to you, and what are you going to do about it?**

Prayer

Lord, challenge me to be as generous as you are, to give freely of what I have, because everything I have has been given to me by you.

**Justice and
Relationships:
Authentic
Relationships Are
The Heart of
Justice**

Week 8

“When people begin moving beyond charity and toward justice and solidarity with the poor and oppressed, as Jesus did, they get in trouble. Once we are actually friends with the folks in struggle, we start to ask why people are poor, which is never as popular as giving to charity.”

- Shane Claiborne

“You can’t lead the people if you don’t love the people. You can’t save the people if you don’t serve the people.”

- Dr. Cornel West

Week 8 | Sun. 9 June – Sat. 15 June
Scripture Reading : Matthew 25:31-46

- 31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne.
- 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.
- 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.
- 34 Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.
- 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,
- 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’
- 37 Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?
- 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?
- 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’
- 40 The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’
- 41 Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.
- 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,
- 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.
- 44 They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’
- 45 He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’
- 46 Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

Reflections

- 1. Jesus says that what we do for the “least of these” we do for him. Is there a difference between doing it “for” him versus doing it “to” him?**
- 2. In today’s world we often don’t see those in need face to face in our everyday lives. Does that make it easier to “refuse” to help to them? Are we less obligated to help those outside our communities?**
- 3. Who are the “least of these” in our world today? How would your encounters with them look if you treated them as you would treat Jesus?**
- 4. What is God saying to you, and what are you going to do about it?**

Prayer

Lord, help me to remember that your heart is for the people, not just the cause. Give me a tender heart toward those experiencing injustice; keep me from apathy. As I passionately seek justice, help me to not do so at the expense of my family and friends, but may my pursuit of justice bring my entire community closer to you.

**Justice and
Creation: A Vision
for All Creation to
Flourish**

Week 9

**“Mom is crying! Our mother Earth is dying! She is really burning!
Lord have mercy on us and lead us and help us, to save our
beautiful mom, our Earth, our globe.”- Belaynesh Bekele**

**“In the words of St. Theresa of Avila, we are God’s hands and
feet on earth, now is the time for us, rooted in prayer, to step up and
take action on the climate crisis.”**

**- The Archbishop of Cape Town and Primate of Southern Africa,
the Most Revd Dr. Thabo Makgoba**

**“It is not possible to love an unseen God while mistreating
God’s visible creation.” - John Woolman**

Week 9 | Sun. 16 June – Sat. 122 June

Scripture Reading : Genesis 1-31

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. **3** And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

4 God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. **5** God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning - the first day. **6** And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water."

7 So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. **8** God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning - the second day.

9 And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. **10** God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. **11** and God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so.

12 The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. **13** And there was evening, and there was morning - the third day. **14** And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, **15** and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so.

16 God made two great lights - the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. **17** God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth,

18 to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. **19** And there was evening, and there was morning - the fourth day.

20 And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky." **21** So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. **22** God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." **23** And there was evening, and there was morning - the fifth day. **24** And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so.

25 God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. **26** and God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. **28** God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." **29** and God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground - everything that has the breath of life in it - I give every green plant for food." And it was so. **31** God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning - the sixth day.

Reflections

- 1. What is the clearest connection you see between brokenness in the environment and brokenness in humanity?**
- 2. What is your theology of creation care? Do you have one?**
- 3. What are some of the ways you try to care for God's creation in your daily life?**
- 4. Why do you think the church historically has been largely silent on care of creation? Do you think this is changing?**
- 5. What is God saying to you, and what are you going to do about it?**

Prayer

Lord, forgive me for actions I have taken that harm your creation. Please guide me to be more aware of protecting the world you have made. Help me see how the actions I take affect your creation and my brothers and sisters around the world. Guide my decisions to live in shalom with all of creation.

